

# UNLICENSED GAMBLING ACTIVITIES



- SPORTS POOLS
- DICE AND COIN CONTESTS
- (ANTIQUE) SLOT MACHINES
- BOWLING SWEEPSTAKES
- TURKEY SHOOT
- GOLFING SWEEPSTAKES
- CARD AND DICE GAMES
- BINGO, RAFFLES, AND AMUSEMENT GAMES
- RAFFLES – MEMBERS ONLY

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**Please contact (360) 438-7654 Ext. 314 or  
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## INTRODUCTION

**Gambling is illegal in the State of Washington UNLESS SPECIFICALLY AUTHORIZED BY LAW. This brochure briefly explains those gambling activities which are authorized to be conducted without obtaining a gambling license.**

The activities described are also specifically limited to persons authorized by the statute. The majority of these activities are limited to charitable / nonprofit organizations that meet the following qualifications:

- Be organized for one or more of the following purposes **only**:

- Educational      • Civic      • Patriotic      • Political      • Social
- Athletic      • Fraternal      • Agricultural

and defined by RCW:

- Religious Societies      • Churches      • Fraternal Societies
- Granges      • Agricultural Fairs

- Have been organized and operating for at least 12 months prior to conducting an unlicensed event;
- Have **at least** 15 actively participating members, each with equal voting rights.
- Have been classified exempt by the Internal Revenue Service from federal income taxes through a declaratory letter issued by the IRS.

**NOTE:** Be careful not to confuse IRS federal employer number correspondence with an IRS exemption letter.

- Able to prove that the organization has made significant progress toward accomplishing their stated purpose(s) over the past 12 consecutive months immediately preceding the unlicensed activity.

Within the restrictions noted in this brochure, bona fide charitable or nonprofit organizations are allowed to operate these activities without obtaining a license:

- Bingo, raffles, and amusement games;
- Raffles – members only;
- Card and dice games,
- Limited social card games,
- Golfing sweepstakes; and
- Turkey shoots.

## TURKEY SHOTS

**RCW 9.46.0361**

- Only charitable / nonprofit organizations.
- Gross revenue not to exceed \$5,000 per year.
- Only members / guests participate.
- Target, shotgun, and ammunition are available for inspection before prize awarded.
- Prize may not be advancement to another turkey shoot.
- All income, less prizes and expenses, must go to support the organization's stated purpose and goals.

### **How to Conduct a Turkey Shoot**

- Target – no more than 100 equal sections.
- Participants sign name on section purchased.
- Chances are sold at not more than \$1 each.
- Shooter is a member, but not a contestant.
- Target must state:
  - Distance from shooting position;
  - Shotgun gauge;
  - Type of choke;
  - Size of shot; and
  - Prizes to be awarded.
- Winning square = most shots that strike the square.
- All income, less prizes and expenses must go to support the organization's stated purpose and goals.

## **BINGO, RAFFLES, AND AMUSEMENT GAMES**

### **RCW 9.46.0321**

- Limited to charitable / nonprofit organizations.
- Conducted no more than twice in a calendar year.
- Combined gross receipts not more than \$5,000 per year.
- Only volunteer members operate, manage, or sell tickets.
- Net proceeds to organizational purposes.
- Notify law enforcement five (5) days in advance.
- Keep records for one year.

## **RAFFLES – MEMBERS ONLY**

### **RCW 9.46.0315**

- Limited to charitable / nonprofit organizations.
- Members only sell and purchase.
- No limit on number of raffles.
- Annual gross receipts not more than \$5,000.
- May award liquor with permit from Liquor Board.
- Credit Unions may only operated unlicensed – member only raffles.

## **RAFFLE TICKET REQUIREMENTS**

### **RCW 9.46.277**

- Each entry must have an equal opportunity of being drawn as a winner.
- Tickets must be consecutively numbered.
- Maximum price of a chance (ticket) is \$25.00.
- All tickets must be sold for the same price (no discounts).
- No free tickets or gifts.
- Tickets must contain the following information or have available in writing at point of sale:
  - Cost per chance;
  - Date / time / location of the drawing;
  - Name of the sponsoring organization;
  - Description of the prize or prizes; and
  - Whether the purchaser must be present to win.

**NOTE:** Where multiple prizes are offered, participants must be informed of all prizes.

## **CARD AND DICE GAMES CONDUCTED IN CERTAIN CHARITABLE / NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS**

### **RCW 9.46.0351**

Charitable / nonprofit clubs holding a *Restaurant – Spirits, Beer, and Wine* liquor license per RCW 66.24.400 may allow their premises to be used by members for card and dice games under the following conditions:

- Only members of the club or of a bona fide auxiliary are allowed to play (**NO GUESTS**);
- The organization may not charge or collect anything from the players or collect a percentage of the wagers; and
- All players must play on an equal basis (no house banked games).

## **LIMITED SOCIAL CARD GAMES**

### **WAC 230-46-100**

Charitable / nonprofit organizations may allow their premises to be used by their members only to play the following card games: Hearts; Rummy; Pitch; Pinochle; Cribbage; Bridge; Bid Whist; and Dominos. No poker or dice games are allowed and all other restrictions per RCW 9.46.0351 apply.

## **GOLFING SWEEPSTAKES**

### **RCW 9.46.0341**

Charitable or nonprofit organizations may conduct sweepstakes based upon the score(s) or the playing ability of a golfing contest between individual players or teams of players. Participation is limited to members of the sponsoring organization or their bona fide guests.

#### **Sweepstakes #1**

- Outcome is dependent on score.
- May be individual or team.
- Tickets sold for "win", "place", or "show".
- Pay-off using a pari-mutuel system.
- All money returned to winner, less expense of sweepstakes, **OR** to the organization's purpose.

#### **Sweepstakes #2**

- All pay a like sum into a common fund.
- Scheme to earn points is determined (eagle, birdie, etc.).
- All players to reach a predetermined number of points will share in the prize fund.
- Nothing goes back to the organization.

#### **Sweepstakes #3**

- Participants bid on a team or player in an auction.
- Person placing the highest bid is awarded the proceeds of the auction, less expenses to the organization's purpose.

## **BOWLING SWEEPSTAKES**

There are two approved methods for sweepstakes available to bowling establishments:

### **RCW 9.46.0269(2)**

- Players contribute to a pool.
- Rules must be posted.
- Players knock down marked pins in specified positions.
- Proprietor does not participate in proceeds from prize fund.
- Records are open to public inspection.

### **RCW 9.46.0345**

- Players purchase tickets at no more than \$1 each.
- Rules are posted.
- A drawing is held from the tickets purchased.
- Winner of drawing must bowl a strike.
- All money goes to the winner or to charity.
- Records are available for inspection by participants or law enforcement and Gambling Commission representatives.

## **DICE AND COIN CONTESTS**

### **RCW 9.46.0305**

Patrons of a food or beverage business may roll dice or flip coins to determine who will pay for:

- Food / beverage to be consumed on the premises; or
- Coin operated music on the premises.

The only unlicensed gambling activities authorized in a food / beverage establishment are dice / coin contests and sports pools. Minors are not allowed to engage in these gambling activities.

## **GAMBLING DEVICES**

### **RCW 9.46.0241**

*(Slot machines, video pull tabs, and other electronic games.)*

Gambling devices are illegal in the State of Washington. However, there is an exception for antique slot machines (RCW 9.46.235) which are classified as follows:

- It is at least 25 years old (antique); and
- It is **not** operated for gambling purposes.

Operation of an antique slot machine is legal only if it is played at no cost or with coins provided at no cost by the machine owner.

An operator may award a prize for high score only if an electronic amusement or video game requires skill instead of chance to win.

**SEE "PROHIBITED GAMBLING ACTIVITIES  
AND CRIMINAL PENALTIES" BROCHURE  
FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.**

## **PROMOTIONAL DRAWINGS**

### **RCW 9.46.0356**

Any drawing which requires a direct or indirect cost to enter is defined as a raffle. Raffles are limited to charitable or nonprofit organizations (see Raffle Rules). Full information on promotional contests of chance that may be conducted by commercial businesses is contained in another brochure.

## **SOCIAL CARD GAMES**

### **RCW 9.46.0325**

No card game in which wagers are placed may be allowed in a food or drink establishment without first obtaining the proper license from the Gambling Commission.

## **SPORTS POOLS**

### **RCW 9.46.0335**

Any person, association, or organization may conduct a sports pool without a license, but only when the outcome is dependent upon the score or scores of an athletic contest. Sports pools must be conducted in the following manner:

- Divide a piece of paper into 100 equal squares and offer these squares at no more than \$1 each;
- Purchasers should sign their name on the square being purchased;
- Before the athletic contest begins, close the pool to additional purchases and assign a prospective score to each square by a random drawing;
- All money paid by entrants must be paid out to the person(s) holding the winning square(s);
- The person or organization may not operate more than one board on the same event; and
- At any time prior to the payment of a prize, the board must be made available for inspection by:
  - Anyone purchasing a chance;
  - Gambling Commission agents; or
  - Law enforcement representatives.

## **WASHINGTON STATE GAMBLING COMMISSION**

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